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Implementation of the Doha Declaration and other resolutions adopted by the Commission at its twenty-ninth session

Summary

Member States of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) adopted the Doha Declaration on the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development at the closing of the twenty-ninth ESCWA session on 15 December 2016, in which they requested the secretariat to continue supporting the implementation process in line with the strategy approved by member States, and several resolutions on the session's topics of discussion.

The present document reviews progress by the secretariat in implementing activities set out in the Doha Declaration, especially in paragraph 27. Each group of activities contained in the Declaration is presented in bold, followed by the action taken by the secretariat. The document also reviews actions taken pursuant to the adopted resolutions. The Commission is invited to take note of the progress made and comment thereon.

ACTION TAKEN BY THE SECRETARIAT

A. DOHA DECLARATION

1. In the Doha Declaration on the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, member States requested the secretariat to undertake the following:

- (a) **Continue to produce informative material on the implementation of the Agenda at the national level, and to focus on local development requirements in rural and urban areas**

Action taken

2. The Unit on the 2030 Agenda, established at ESCWA to support member States in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), is conducting analytical research on best practices and trends in voluntary national reviews submitted by countries since the adoption of the 2030 Agenda. Under a project on the implementation, follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development aimed at strengthening the capacity of Arab countries, the Unit is working on publishing guides, developing guidelines and training material, and organizing regional workshops to raise awareness on adapting the SDGs and incorporating them in national plans.

3. Activities implemented by the secretariat included the following:

- A training workshop on implementing the 2030 Agenda on the Sudan, aimed at discussing the Agenda with the country team working on the national adaptation of the SDGs in the light of the background and elements of the national programme on sustainable development 2030, and at providing skills training on designing awareness-raising campaigns to ensure SDG achievement at the national level (Khartoum, 15-19 January 2017). Governmental and non-governmental stakeholders participated in the workshop, which can be adapted to the needs of other member States upon request.
- The Arab Preparatory Meeting on Energy-related Issues for the 2018 Arab Forum on Sustainable Development and High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, which covered key sustainable energy issues and progress in achieving SDG 7 and the links between it and other development issues; and reviewed and evaluated major priorities for policymakers so as to increase consistency between national plans and the 2030 Agenda (Beirut, 27-28 March 2018).
- The Arab Preparatory Meeting on Water Issues for the 2018 Arab Forum on Sustainable Development and High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, during which participants exchanged expertise, considered indicators on water resources and discussed ways to enhance dialogue between Arab stakeholders on all water-related indicators, especially those under SDG 6 (Beirut, 28-29 March 2018). The outcome document was discussed at the tenth session of the Arab Ministerial Water Council, held in Kuwait from 2 to 4 May 2018.
- The Arab Preparatory Meeting on Environmental and Natural Resources Issues for the 2018 Arab Forum on Sustainable Development and High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, which considered the path towards achieving SDG 11 (Cairo, 11-12 April 2018).
- An expert group meeting on Arab regional challenges associated with conflict and the 2030 Agenda, in which participants, including representatives of regional and multilateral bodies and specialized civil society organizations, discussed challenges hindering the implementation of the 2030 Agenda due to conflicts and their repercussions (Beirut, 6-7 December 2017).

- A study on transport and the SDGs, which reviews the interlinkages between transport performance and the SDGs. It contains a set of guidelines to incorporate the SDGs in strategies and action plans in the field of transport in Arab countries. The study was used at a capacity-building workshop on strategic planning in the Palestinian transport sector, held in Beirut on 22 and 23 March 2017; and in transport planning discussions with staff of the Iraqi Ministry of Transport on 24 October 2017.
 - A study on trade and the SDGs, which identifies the relationship between trade and several SDGs. The study presents the results of a survey on trade officials' vision for trade liberalization and sustainable development, and provides recommendations to Arab countries on ways to strengthen the role of trade in achieving the SDGs.
 - A study on the links between the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) and the SDGs in employment, industry and economic growth. The study aims to highlight the links between SDGs 8 and 9 and the WSIS action lines.
 - A technical paper entitled "Next generation digital infrastructure: challenges and opportunities for development in the Arab region", aimed at analysing the links between WSIS action line 2 and SDG 9. The paper focuses on the priorities and challenges related to digital infrastructure in the Arab region.
 - A regional report entitled "Social Protection for Persons with Disabilities in Arab Countries", based on SDGs 1, 4, 8, 10, 11, 16 and 17. ESCWA also published technical papers on conditional cash transfers in Arab countries; the impact of subsidy reform on society; the impact of expenditure changes on social protection in Arab countries; and the features of social protection in Mauritania and Tunisia, in support of target 1.3 on social protection.
 - A working paper entitled "Slum upgrading in the Arab region", in support of the implementation of SDG 11.
 - The Social Development Bulletin entitled "International Human Rights Law and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development", which covers legal commitments in SDG implementation.
- (b) Prepare a concept paper on establishing an Arab forum for financing sustainable development in the region, which complements the role of the Arab Forum for Sustainable Development**

Action taken

4. ESCWA prepared a concept paper on establishing an Arab forum for financing sustainable development in the region, which was discussed at the twelfth session of the ESCWA Committee on Liberalization of Foreign Trade, Economic Globalization and Financing for Development (focus on finance), held in Beirut on 4 and 5 December 2017.

- (c) Prepare working papers on the interlinkages between the Agenda's economic, social, environmental, political/institutional and cultural dimensions and its 17 goals, and on the role of the various actors in its implementation, including Governments, civil society and the private sector**
- (d) Develop approaches that facilitate incorporating and adapting the Agenda and its Goals and targets nationally and regionally, including an approach to identify sets of interlinked goals drawn from national priorities, so as to ensure effectiveness and efficiency; and implement programmes to build national capacity and transfer knowledge to benefit from regional and international initiatives; prepare training**

material and programmes and the necessary guides to develop national capacity and assist decision makers and development partners in the implementation process, including parliamentarians and civil society organizations

Action taken

5. Activities implemented by the secretariat included the following:

- Supporting the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation of Jordan in transforming the road map for implementing the 2030 Agenda into a work programme for implementation at the national level with the involvement of all stakeholders. The technical support provided by ESCWA focused on several provisions of the road map, such as developing mechanisms to align national priorities with the SDGs and ways to adapt the SDGs to the local context, and formulating communication, awareness-raising and advocacy strategies for the 2030 Agenda.
- Supporting the formation of the Intersessional Expert Group on Disability, which is an intergovernmental network of experts on disability policies in member States, aimed at strengthening South-South cooperation and information exchange on disability policy, and at supporting the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and SDG target 8.5.
- Preparing a practical guide aimed at building the capacity of officials responsible for policy formulation and planning in member States to incorporate social justice concepts and principles in national development policies, plans and programmes in a way that ensures that they fulfil the Goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda and other global commitments. The guide also discusses the relationship between the 2030 Agenda and selected public policy fields aimed at achieving social justice.
- Developing a preliminary economic model to simulate the SDGs, which includes a quantitative tool aimed at avoiding the adverse effects caused by the complexity of implementing the SDGs. The tool focuses on arbitrating between conflicting Goals by identifying the best interlinkages between targets.
- Holding three regional capacity-building workshops in 2017, focusing on strengthening the technical capacity of government officials who manage the provision of water and energy services in member States and who supervise issues related to sustainable energy, technology transfer and resource efficiency, so as to assist member States in incorporating energy and water-related SDGs in their national development plans.
- Organizing a round-table discussion, in collaboration with the International Renewable Energy Agency, at the eighth session of the Agency's Assembly held in Abu Dhabi on 13 and 14 January 2018. Discussions focused on the regional dimension of the implementation of SDG 7.
- Holding a symposium on women and water security for peacebuilding in the Arab region (Beirut, 9-10 May 2018), in collaboration with the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, which considered the links between water security and women's issues in the Arab region so as to strengthen national capacity to mainstream the nexus in national plans and strategies. It especially focused on building the capacity of government and non-government stakeholders in the region in formulating and implementing strategies, policies, frameworks and programmes to support SDGs 3, 5, 6 and 16.
- Preparing two studies on violence against women, which focus on target 5.2 on eliminating all forms of violence against all women and girls in public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation.

- Drafting a study on gender justice in the Arab region, which focuses on target 5.1 on ending all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere. The study considers progress in the Arab region in tackling discrimination against women, and in developing accountability mechanisms to combat all forms of discrimination and institutional mechanisms that ensure redress for victims.
- Preparing a series of country profiles on the status of social protection in Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Mauritania, the State of Palestine, Tunisia and Yemen. The reports cover the status of social protection system and programmes in those countries, including social security and health insurance programmes and social benefits. It also identifies gaps to assist decision makers in developing appropriate reform policies and strategies.
- The Regional Seminar for Parliamentarians on the 2030 Agenda, which focused on parliamentarians' key role in implementing the Agenda and on identifying ways to operationalize that role in the implementation, follow-up and review at the national and regional levels (Beirut, 8-9 November 2017). The seminar concluded with a series of key messages and a draft action plan.
- A participatory workshop for a working group on freedoms and human rights in Jordan on the SDGs and their implementation mechanisms at the national level, which aimed to raise awareness about the importance of leveraging the group's functions and broadening its mandate in the framework of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, and the necessity of ensuring consistency with other working groups and stakeholders (Amman, 13-15 March 2018). The workshop also enabled the working group to consider the Executive Development Plan of Jordan and its coherence with the SDGs, focusing on SDGs 5, 10 and 16.
- Workshops on SDG 5: a workshop on measuring women's representation in local government in the Arab region aimed at ensuring full women's participation and their enjoyment of equal rights in leadership positions at all decision-making levels in political, economic and public life, with a focus on SDG target 5.5, which was attended by officials from national statistical offices and ministries of internal affairs and of women's affairs in Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Morocco and the State of Palestine (Beirut, 12-13 September 2017); a capacity-building workshop on gender equality, women's empowerment and Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) for the national women's machinery of Mauritania (Nouakchott, 20-23 March 2017); a training workshop on responding to Goal 5 of the Sustainable Development Agenda in the Syrian Arab Republic (Beirut, 27-28 March 2017); a workshop on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs and its alignment with national development plans for the Jordanian National Commission for Women (Jordan, Dead Sea, 8-10 August 2017); and technical assistance to staff of the Ministry of State for Women's Affairs in Lebanon on implementing the SDGs and the 2030 Agenda (Beirut, 19-20 September 2017).
- National and regional workshops on tax base erosion and profit shifting, and on avoiding double taxation, in response to several requests for assistance on tax cooperation and within the framework of efforts aimed at improving economic planning and developing evidence-based policies to enhance sustainable development.
- Following up on the integrated approach to the SDGs by implementing a capacity-building project for countries on the water-energy nexus through two parallel and complementary: the first process was aimed at high-level officials in ministries of energy and of water to train them on mainstreaming the nexus in strategies, policies and plans at the national and regional levels by using a set of regional policy instruments; and the second process was aimed at service providers in the water and energy sectors, and was supported by technical interventions using an operational toolkit on resource efficiency, renewable energy and technology transfer.

- (e) Continue to develop analysis tools that assist in determining interlinkages between goals, in accordance with country specificities and national plans, including network analysis, modelling and forecasting; and work with member States to build capacity in this field**

Action taken

6. Activities implemented by the secretariat included the following:

- A preliminary model to simulate the SDGs, which proposes a quantitative tool for incorporating the SDGs in economic planning, and details the theoretical and technical aspects of the tool and its preconditions, restrictions, necessary equipment and problem-solving techniques.
- A study entitled “Sustainable Development Goals in an Arab Region Affected by Conflict: Monitoring the Sustainable Development Goals with Household Survey Microdata”, which shows the importance of national household surveys in monitoring progress and identifying policy priorities in conflict-affected countries. The study presents comprehensive analyses of Goals and indicators in priority areas requiring interventions at the subnational level, using data disaggregated by sex and location (urban-rural).
- A social policy brief entitled “Inequality in the SDGs: Fighting Multidimensional Inequality in the Arab Region”, which considers the interlinkages between SDG 10 and social, demographic, economic, environmental and cultural issues and priorities in the Arab region. The policy brief presents the concept of inequality and the most common tools for its measurement, and highlights its adverse impact on the well-being of people and on countries, focusing on multidimensional inequality and its levels. It concludes with recommendations to decision makers and other stakeholders in that regard.
- An implementation framework for the environmental dimension of the 2030 Agenda in the Arab region, which was discussed at a consultative meeting held in Cairo from 18 to 20 September 2017. The framework includes the adopted approach, an assessment of environmental priorities in the Arab region, and an analysis of the extent to which the environmental dimension of the SDGs is mainstreamed in regional and national development frameworks.
- A publication entitled “Arab Region Progress in Sustainable Energy: Global Tracking Framework Regional Report”, which adopts a regional perspective on a wide range of indicators and a detailed analysis of progress in the Arab region over the past two decades in developing sustainable energy, focusing on access to energy, fuel and clean and modern technologies, energy efficiency and dissemination of renewable energy. The report provides recommendations on policies covering institution building, financing, market restructuring and capacity-building.
- A publication entitled “Arab Horizon 2030: Prospects for Enhancing Food Security in the Arab Region”, which includes an overview of food security in the Arab region. It considers the three dimensions of food security, namely availability, access and utilization, and analyses pressing issues in agriculture, international food trade, and food loss and waste. The report concludes with a set of findings and policy recommendations.
- The ESCWA Water Development Report No. 7: Climate Change and Disaster Risk Reduction in the Arab Region, which focuses on the links between SDG targets on climate change and disaster risk reduction to adopt an integrated approach to monitoring and implementing those targets in line with the 2030 Agenda, the Paris Agreement on climate change and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030. It also proposes a methodology to link between the outputs of the Regional Initiative for the Assessment of Climate Change Impacts on Water Resources and Socio-economic Vulnerability in the Arab Region (RICCAR) and historical disaster loss databases in Arab countries to identify risk areas and inform decision makers.

- (f) Build national capacity to prepare reports on progress achieved in implementing the Sustainable Development Goals, and disseminate existing approaches to drafting such reports**

Action taken

7. Activities implemented by the secretariat included the following:

- The Arab Financing for Development Scorecard, which was developed by the secretariat to assist member States in evaluating progress in the implementation of the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development. Analysis of the Scorecard's outputs shows that resources have flowed out of the region in recent years, rather than being used to support development within the region.
 - A document on monitoring and performance evaluation under national development plans, which contains a method to record the performance of monitoring and evaluation processes for implementing the 2030 Agenda and SDGs. The document presents performance recording as a basic exercise that enables Governments to measure progress, determine gaps between Goals and achievements, and undertake future planning.
 - The Arab Forum on Sustainable Development, held in Rabat from 3 to 5 May 2017 and in Beirut, from 24 to 26 April 2018, in collaboration with the League of Arab States and other United Nations entities operating in the Arab region, which constituted a high-level platform to review and follow up on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda in the Arab region. ESCWA also reviewed the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs Handbook for the Preparation of Voluntary National Reviews, translated it into Arabic and distributed it at the 2018 Arab Forum.
 - Assistance to member States in adopting methodologies to measure progress in achieving water-related targets, under an integrated monitoring initiative for SDG 6 launched by UN Water.
- (g) Assist Arab countries in developing appropriate institutional arrangements and coordination mechanisms between entities in national statistical offices, so as to improve efficiency in monitoring and evaluating progress in implementing the Sustainable Development Goals and their targets**

Action taken

8. Activities implemented by the secretariat included the following:

- Evaluations of national statistical systems in Egypt and Jordan, aimed at formulating national strategies to develop statistics in support of the 2030 Agenda. The secretariat is organizing similar evaluations in Libya, the Sudan and Yemen, in cooperation with all bodies that produce and use official statistics.
- A workshop on sound institutional environment, cooperation, dialogue and partnerships for the production and utilization of SDG indicators, targeting officials at national statistical offices and policymakers (Tunis, 6-8 February 2018).
- A workshop on integrated environmental and economic accounting systems to support SDGs in the Arab region (Amman, 26-29 March 2018); a national workshop in Jordan on statistics and data: environmental statistics and the SDGs (Amman, 25 March 2018); a regional workshop on industrial statistics and a meeting on short-term economic indicators (Beirut, 11-15 December 2017); and a workshop on measuring women's representation in local government (Beirut, 12-13 September 2017).

- Guidelines to mainstream disability issues in SDG data collection, prepared in collaboration with national statistical offices and the Washington Group on Disability Statistics.
- (h) **Conduct a comprehensive evaluation of the availability of good quality statistics for use in preparing indicators to measure progress in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, in collaboration and coordination with the secretariat of the Arab Working Group on Environment and Sustainable Development Indicators and national statistical offices**

Action taken

9. Activities implemented by the secretariat included the following:

- A comprehensive evaluation of data availability for monitoring purposes, prepared by ESCWA in collaboration with the United Nations Statistics Division and the League of Arab States. Work is currently underway to update analysis data. Results were presented to the ESCWA Statistical Committee at its twelfth session, held in Beirut on 4 and 5 April 2017, in a document entitled "Role of official statistics in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in the Arab region: data availability on the Sustainable Development Goals".
- An expert group meeting on tracking progress towards the implementation of energy-related SDGs in the Arab region, aimed at helping member States to monitor progress and the development and implementation of sustainable energy action plans at the national level, based on SDG indicators (Beirut, 24-25 January 2017).
- An expert group meeting on tracking progress towards sustainable energy – horizon 2030 in the Arab region. The meeting reviewed the findings of the Global Tracking Framework regional report and identified similarities and differences between Arab countries' approaches and their understanding of sustainable energy in the context of SDG 7 (Cairo, 14-15 May 2017).
- (i) **Identify a narrow set of indicators, based on national and regional priorities while taking into account the capacity of Arab countries to provide the necessary indicators in line with the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics and international standards, so as to periodically monitor the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals**

Action taken

10. Activities implemented by the secretariat included the following:

- A list of primary and secondary population indicators for Arab countries, prepared by the ESCWA Technical Advisory Group on Demographic and Social Statistics in collaboration with the United Nations Population Fund and national statistical offices. The ESCWA Statistical Committee adopted those indicators at its twelfth session (Beirut, 4-5 April 2017).
- The thirteenth sectoral meeting of the United Nations and the League of Arab States and their specialized agencies on cooperation in the preservation and management of water resources in the Arab region, which highlighted the need for developing a framework to follow up on the implementation of SDG target 6.4, especially on substantially reducing the number of people suffering from water scarcity (Cairo, 23-25 October 2017).

B. RESOLUTIONS

323 (XXIX) Adoption of the strategic framework for the biennium 2018-2019

Summary of the resolution

11. In this resolution, the Commission endorsed the draft strategic framework for the biennium 2018-2019, and noted comments by member States for inclusion in the programme of work for the biennium 2018-2019. It also requested the secretariat to propagate the strategic framework as adopted by member States.

Action taken

12. Under item 18 of the provisional agenda of the thirtieth session of ESCWA, the secretariat is proposing amendments to the strategic framework and programme of work for the biennium 2018-2019, focusing on global and regional priorities and needs that emerged since the adoption of the strategic framework and the programme of work. Amendments to the strategic framework involve the Unit on the 2030 Agenda and amendments to the programme of work are proposed to increase focus on youth empowerment in programmes and activities.

324 (XXIX) Adoption of the reports of the subsidiary bodies of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia

Summary of the resolution

13. In this resolution, the Commission considered the recommendations set out in the reports of the subsidiary bodies on their sessions held in the period between the second meeting of the Executive Committee and the twenty-ninth ESCWA session, namely the report on the tenth session of the Committee on Liberalization of Foreign Trade, Economic Globalization and Financing for Development; the report on the sixteenth session of the Committee on Transport; and the report on the seventh session of the Committee on Women. It adopted the recommendations set out in the above-mentioned reports of the subsidiary bodies, and requested the Executive Secretary to continue following up on their implementation.

Action taken

14. The secretariat is continuing to implement recommendations made by subsidiary bodies, and is presenting progress reports to member States.

325 (XXIX) Adoption of the proposed amendments to the ESCWA programme of work for the biennium 2016-2017

Summary of the resolution

15. In this resolution, the Commission adopted the proposed amendments to the programme of work for the biennium 2016-2017, taking into account comments from member States at the session. It also requested the secretariat to follow up on the implementation of the programme of work and include therein the necessary activities to address any challenges that may emerge in the Arab region.

Action taken

16. By December 2017, ESCWA had implemented 99 per cent of its mandated outputs under its programme of work, including the additions made in 2017 pursuant to General Assembly resolution 71/272 of 23 December 2016 on special subjects relating to the programme budget for the biennium 2016-2017. All the expected achievements for the biennium 2016-2017 have been fulfilled.

326 (XXIX) *Justice for the Palestinian people: fifty years of Israeli occupation**Summary of the resolution*

17. In this resolution, the Commission requested the secretariat to continue supporting the Palestinian people and its institutions by taking action that included: increase activities on Palestine; provide support to the Government of Palestine in implementing the National Policy Agenda 2017-2022, and support Palestinian endeavours to implement the 2030 Agenda; coordinate and collaborate with relevant Palestinian entities to develop an ESCWA media and communications strategy aimed at increasing global awareness of the Palestinian cause and of development challenges in view of the occupation and Israeli violations of Palestinian rights and international law; continue to monitor and evaluate the repercussions of the Israeli occupation for the Palestinian people and future generations; strengthen efforts to calculate the cumulative impact of the Israeli occupation and its practices on the Palestinian people; and strive to establish a specialized unit on issues related to Palestine and its people, including monitoring Israeli violations of the Palestinian people's rights and of international law, documenting the economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation and its overall cost, supporting Palestinian institutions in their development efforts, and continue supporting the Palestinian people to realize all its rights guaranteed by United Nations resolutions and international treaties and charters.

Action taken

- ESCWA carried out a consultative process with over 60 experts from various backgrounds and specialities on the potential benefits, uses and approaches of calculating the cost of the occupation, so as to prepare a report on the cumulative cost of the occupation.
- ESCWA hosted a coordination meeting with the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development and the Government of the State of Palestine in Beirut on 24 March to determine cooperation and partnerships in calculating the cost of occupation.
- ESCWA organized a capacity-building workshop entitled "Partnerships for empowering a future State of Palestine: Sustainable Development Goal 17 and South-South and triangular cooperation", in collaboration with the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People and the Division for Palestinian Rights of the United Nations Secretariat (Beirut, 27-28 April 2017). The workshop deepened participants' understanding of the merits and mechanisms of South-South and triangular cooperation; introduced several tools and methods to identify challenges and opportunities in forging partnerships; and highlighted the role of the United Nations, especially the regional commissions, in stimulating partnerships to achieve the SDGs.
- ESCWA held an expert group meeting on the impact of occupation on human development in the State of Palestine (Amman, 20-21 July 2017). Participants discussed the impact of the Israeli occupation on sustainable development in Palestine, and the mechanisms and possibilities for its measurement. They also considered the continuing challenges facing Palestinians under the Israeli occupation in issues related to housing, water availability, agriculture, industry, finance and trade services, freedom of movement, expression and political association, and the right to return and to self-determination. Participants discussed the need to devise solutions to tackle the repercussions of Israeli occupation, so as to achieve the SDGs. The meeting concluded with a set of recommendations on future research aimed at advancing human development and building human capital in Palestine.
- ESCWA prepared the note by the Secretary-General on the economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan, which was presented to the Economic and Social Council in July 2017 and the General Assembly in September 2017. It also prepared the note for 2018, which will be presented to the Council and General Assembly at their annual sessions.

- ESCWA marked the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People on 29 November 2017 with activities aimed at raising awareness of the Palestinian people's plight and rights and at mobilizing support for them.
- The secretariat established the Palestine Unit in the Emerging and Conflict-related Issues Division, with functions including implementing relevant resolutions emanating from ESCWA sessions and Executive Committee recommendations; harmonizing ESCWA activities to support the Palestinian people and their institutions in achieving sustainable development in spite of the occupation and mitigating its impact; documenting and analysing the economic and social repercussions of Israeli practices and policies and assessing their long-term and cumulative impact; and preparing periodic reports and studies on Israeli violations of the rights of the Palestinian people and of international law.

327 (XXIX) Working mechanisms of the Arab Forum on Sustainable Development

Summary of the resolution

18. In this resolution, the Commission affirmed the important role of the Arab Forum on Sustainable Development as a regional platform where stakeholders can address sustainable development issues from an integrated perspective, consider formulations, frameworks and follow-up and review mechanisms for the 2030 Agenda, and contribute to building a unified position on the opportunities and challenges of achieving sustainable development in the Arab region. The Commission also invited presentations of national and regional experiences in implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including voluntary national reports on progress in this regard; and endorsed the annexed terms of reference, which organize the working mechanisms of the Forum in a manner that guarantees its effectiveness and success in strengthening regional cooperation and coordination to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Action taken

19. The outcomes of the 2018 Arab Forum on Sustainable Development will be presented to member States under item 8 of the provisional agenda of the thirtieth ESCWA session.

328 (XXIX) Technical cooperation to meet the needs and priorities of member States

Summary of the resolution

20. In this resolution, the Commission commended the efforts of the secretariat in linking its technical cooperation work with its other core functions of research and analysis and consensus-building to support policy formulation; urged it to continue strengthening strategic partnerships between United Nations technical cooperation programmes and member States, and to strengthen regional cooperation and integration and South-South cooperation to support the 2030 Agenda and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda. It also requested the secretariat to adopt a programmatic approach based on specific plans for long-term technical cooperation between ESCWA and member States.

Action taken

21. Developments related to this resolution will be presented under item 16 of the provisional agenda of the thirtieth ESCWA session.
